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ABSTRACT

With the increasing focus on issues pertaining, for example, to race, class, and gender, social science studies have increasingly relied on postmodern theory. Postmodern critiques have enlarged in scope and increasingly confronted traditional social scientists with challenges: epistemic, methodological, and moral. This paper asserts that while these challenges have, on the positive side, reinvigorated various lines of research, they have also often become excessive and unwarranted, and can unduly constrain the shape of social scientific research. The paper first speaks to substantive and pervasive problems with postmodern theory itself. Secondly, it demonstrates from a variety of theoretical perspectives how many of the legitimate concerns of postmodernists can and are addressed in current "modern" research programs. To substantiate this position, the paper draws on recent studies on the development of environmental moral reasoning and values. The paper's goal is to reclaim some of the methods and terminology which postmodernists have begun to privilege as their own in the hope that postmodernity will give way to the post-postmodern era: modernity itself, reinvigorated. Contains 85 references. (EV)

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Reinstating Modernity in Social Science Research -- or --

The Status of Bullwinkle in a Post-Postmodern Era

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Reinstating Modernity in Social Science Research -- or --

The Status of Bullwinkle in a Post-Postmodern Era

In recent years, postmodern critiques have enlarged in scope, and increasingly confronted traditional social scientists with challenges: epistemic, methodological, and moral. While these challenges have, on the positive side, reinvigorated various lines of research, they have also often become excessive and unwarranted, and can unduly constrain the shape of social scientific research.

In this paper, we first speak to substantive and pervasive problems within postmodern theory itself. Some of these problems have become popularized since Alan Sokal's recent essay in the journal Social Text. As the reader may know, in Sokal's essay he purports to link quantum mechanics with postmodern thought. Sokal wrote the essay as a spoof on postmodernity insofar as he cloaked illogical and nonsensical ideas in postmodern jargon and passed off the result as postmodern scholarship in a peer-reviewed journal. In a vehement response, Stanley Fish (1996) contends that Sokal misunderstands the postmodern position. Fish says that in baseball, for example, balls and strikes are not objective features of the world (independent of human actors), but certainly real: but real by virtue of their being social constructions. So, too, Fish says that scientific findings are real.

In turn, we suggest that Fish -- like many postmodernists -- fails to distinguish important differences in forms of knowledge. Even if all knowledge involves social constructions, it matters very much, epistemologically and morally, that we distinguish for example fictional characters from real people. The cartoon character Bullwinkle can be pushed out of an airborne plane, and we can laugh at the absurdity of a cartoon character plummeting to the ground; not so when we learn that by this very means the military in Argentina has killed political dissidents. In other words, when many post-modernists "walk the talk" -- that is, when their implications are taken seriously -- their approaches lead to contradictions in terms of epistemology, to nihilism in terms of action and commitment, and to opportunism in terms of justice and interpersonal relationships (cf. Lourenco, 1996).

Second, and perhaps more important -- since deconstruction is not finally our goal -- we demonstrate from a variety of theoretical perspectives how many of the legitimate concerns of postmodernists can and are addressed in current "modern" research programs. After all, how exactly does a postmodernist engage in social-scientific research? Perhaps postmodern researchers focus on qualitative data over quantitative, and recognize that a researcher brings his or her own perspectives and concerns into a study. Perhaps such researchers are interested in narrative, or draw on interviews and multiple perspectives, or seek to integrate perspectives into a larger perspective (a coherent story). Perhaps postmodern research involves careful attention to culture and context, and to hierarchical systems of power. And so on. Our position, however, is that any and all of these methods and concerns are compatible with modern social science research.

To substantiate this position, we draw on recent studies on the development of environmental moral reasoning and values (Howe, Kahn, & Friedman, 1996; Kahn, in press a, b; Kahn & Friedman, 1995, 1997). Populations range from black children and parents in Houston Texas, to Brazilian children in urban and rural parts of the Amazon jungle. Our goal

here is also to reclaim some of the methods and terminology which postmodernists have begun to privilege as their own.

Most generally, it is our hope that postmodernity will give way to the post-postmodern era: modernity itself, reinvigorated.

Postmodern Theory

Deconstruction Postmodern Theory. Postmodern theory is a broad term, and means different things to different people. Yet amidst such broad territory, two types of postmodern theories can be characterized on the basis of their epistemic claims: deconstruction postmodernism and affirmative postmodernism. Deconstruction (e.g., Culler, 1982; Derrida, 1978; Foucault, 1983; Morss, 1992; Norris, 1982; Scholes, 1989) sharply calls into question traditional scientific research methods and assumptions. For example, deconstructionists ask us to abandon our search for generalizable research findings since they claim that the concept of generalizability is itself flawed. How can one generalize if a priori every culture and context is different? In addition, deconstructionists ask that we abandon modern constructs of truth, morality, logic, objectivity, and even rationality. For what is considered true, moral, logical, objective or rational in one culture or context may not be so considered in another culture because such constructs only arise out of and gain meaning through culture and context.

Toward assessing deconstructionist theory, it is first important to recognize three related forms of internal contradictions within the theory itself. First, deconstructionists argue against theory building, and yet themselves advance a theoretical position. Second, deconstructionists seek to deconstruct the tools of logic, reason, and rationality, and yet they seek to do so with those very tools. Third, deconstructionists argue against privileging any position. Yet, if their theory (that holds that no theory can be true for everyone) holds for everyone, even for the person who mistakenly believes it false, then the theory does what it says cannot be done. It privileges itself. It establishes some basis for truth that transcends its own confines. (For a discussion of these and related issues, see, e.g., Crews, 1986, 1989; Hoy, 1985; Kahn 1991; Rosenau, 1992; Searle, 1983; Turiel, 1989, in press; Williams, 1985.)

It has been said, however, that deconstructionists are less concerned with putting forth a full-bodied coherent theory, and more interested in providing a theoretical platform by which to empower the disenfranchised, and right injustices. But such an offering provides less than is first apparent. To illustrate this point, consider a recent controversy that involved Jacques Derrida, who is often credited with founding deconstruction. In 1987, Derrida provided an interview with a French newspaper in which he "explained Heidegger's enthusiasm for Nazism as an outgrowth of Western metaphysics and engaged in a deconstruction of Nazism and 'non-Nazism' in an attempt to show the 'law of resemblance' between them" (McMillen, 1993, A8). By some accounts, this interview taints Derrida by associating his intellectual roots through Heidegger with Nazism, and by highlighting Derrida's attempt to minimize Nazi immorality. Subsequent to this interview, Wolin edited a book published by Columbia University Press that sought to document Heidegger's intimate involvement with Nazism. In the process, Wolin obtained appropriate legal permission from the French newspaper, which holds the copyright to Derrida's article, to translate and publish the interview in his edited book. However, in granting Wolin permission to use Derrida's article, the newspaper never notified Derrida; and when Derrida came upon the published book, with his interview included, he was outraged. In response, Derrida threatened Columbia University Press with legal action unless they halted any further printing of the volume. As a courtesy, Wolin offered that further printings could exclude the Derrida interview. Wolin only

required that he be able to include an additional preface that commented on Derrida's actions. Derrida still objected, and Columbia University Press let the book go out of print after several months.[1]

Within this context, it is interesting to note the language Derrida (1993) uses to argue his case in one of several bitter exchanges between himself and Wolin that appeared in the New York Review of Books.

> I merely demanded that my interview be withdrawn from any subsequent printings or editions.... Do I not have the right to protest when a text of mine is published without my authorization, in a bad translation, and in what I think is a bad book? As I have since written to him, Mr. Wolin seems to be more eager to give lessons in political morality than to try to respect the authors he writes about and publishes, in a greater hurry to accuse than to understand difficult texts and thinking.... (p. 44)

Derrida here is not being entirely unreasonable. True, he did not hold a legal claim to his interview. But, still, one can argue that, legality aside, morality requires that an author's permission be given to include the author's interview in a volume that casts him unfavorably. But Derrida's own theory of deconstruction seems to disallow the very claims he wants to make. Specifically, how is it possible for Derrida -- who seeks to undermine the very notion of authorship -- to claim that he has been mistranslated? Such a claim would seem to imply that there are criteria or standards that transcend culture and context by which to judge the merits of a translation, the antithesis of what deconstruction embodies. Derrida also asks that Mr. Wolin respect the authors he writes about. But whose notion of respect are we to respect? Or does Derrida want to suggest that there is a fundamental core to the idea of "respect for author" that transcends culture and context? Finally, Derrida talks about his "right to protest." But are not "rights" part of the baggage of modernity that Derrida seeks to jettison?

Deconstructionists can coherently make claims that pertain to truth and morality from the first person perspective. "I believe," "I think," "I advocate, "I want." But such claims are limited in their scope and efficacy, let alone moral outlook, for not only do the claims originate from the first person perspective, but they end there as well. That is, again, according to deconstruction there is no external truth or perspective or criteria to which one might appeal. No conception of justice against which a person or people can be judged. Indeed, even rational arguments carry no special weight. For in the same way that Derrida shows the "law of resemblance" between Nazism and non-Nazism, so can deconstructionists deconstruct the very notion of rationality.

Because no position, idea, or action can be privileged -- that is, judged better, or more adequate, more intellectually sound, more comprehensive, or more moral than something else -- deconstructionists ultimately have few recourses when injustices occur. True, deconstructionsists can do all the things other people do. In a democratic society, for instance, deconstructionists can write and speak publicly, help draft legislation, use the legal system to press their claims, and run for public office. But such actions are somewhat disingenuous. The deconstructionist might run for public office, for example, not because there is a commitment to the democratic process (after all, democracy cannot be privileged over fascism) but because that is the way within a democratic government by which to gain power. Power is primary. Power not only subjugates, but liberates. This is the reason that deconstructionists so often emphasize power in their analyses. Note but some recent titles from the postmodern educational literature: "Empowering Education" (Shor, 1992), "Critical Pedagogy and the Cultural Politics of Resistance" (McLaren, 1989), "Education Under Siege" (Aronwitz, & Giroux, 1985), "Schooling and the Struggle for Public Life" (Giroux, 1988), "Literacy and the

Pedagogy of Political Empowerment" (Giroux, 1987), "Empowerment as a Pedagogy of Possibility" (Simon, 1987).

The added twist to this scenario is that once deconstructionists gain power, it is very easy for them to fell prey to perpetrating the same injustices that they rebelled against. After all, other groups are the "other," are different, and thus potentially not deserving of the same moral considerations as those of one's own group. This is especially so given that the very construct of morality is but a product of person and place. Thus it is our contention and worry that deconstruction as a theory is open to become totalitarian, disregarding of human rights and dignity.

Something along these lines may have led the University of Illinois, Chicago to remove a feminist scholar from teaching courses in sociology and women's studies (Magner, 1992). What appears to have happened is that a male student had disagreed with many of the teacher's feminist positions. As a result, according to university investigators, it followed that the teacher did not accord this male student the same classroom talking rights as female students, and pressured him to drop the course. While information was not available about this feminist's particular postmodern orientation, her actions are compatible with deconstruction. And there is our beef. Because female students have been and often still are unjustly silenced in the classroom, deconstruction can provide a platform for silencing male students.

Such exclusionary orientations, in the name of authenticating the female students' voice, abound in postmodern feminist scholarship (see, e.g., Daly, 1980). Unchecked, of course, such exclusion does not stop with men. After all, the category of woman (like the category of man or white or Jew or Muslim) is not singular. There are black women and white women. Hispanic women. Lesbians and heterosexual women. Married women and single women. We dare say that there are as many ways to categorize women as there are women.

Thus if deconstruction postmodern theory takes hold, we move toward an increasingly factionalist society. And if our view is correct -- that deconstructionists have little recourse except to gain power to enforce their views -- then increasingly splintered groups will increasingly battle one another for power. It is not a pretty picture.

Affirmative Postmodern Theory: Many postmodern theorists have been troubled by at least some of the above concerns about deconstruction, in theory and practice. In response, they have attempted to put forth modified positions which Rosenau (1992) and others have labeled as "affirmative" postmodern theories. Affirmative theories (e.g., Giroux, 1990; Hammer & MacLaren, 1991; Hassan, 1985; Murphy, 1987, 1988; Richardson, 1988; Weiler & Mitchell, 1992; Wyschogrod, 1990) still argue for the plurality of value systems but do not maintain that such plurality necessarily leads to the relativism that is so troubling in deconstruction. As noted by Rosenau (1992) "[a]ffirmative post-modernists frequently employ terms such as oppression, exploitation, domination, liberation, freedom, insubordination, and resistance -- all of which imply judgment or at least a normative frame of reference in which some definitive preferences are expressed" (p. 136). Moreover, in contrast to nihilism that often pervades deconstructionist political theory, affirmatives often favor forms of democracy that empower individuals and especially underrepresented groups. At the same time, affirmatives usually embrace a deconstruction-like epistemology wherein it is maintained that all knowledge is socially constructed.

It is easy to applaud the affirmative's focus on democracy. But can affirmatives maintain their non-relativistic views in light of their deconstructionist-like epistemology?

Affirmatives think they can, though are often circumspect in articulating exactly how. As we understand their position, however, the skeleton of their response looks something like this. They maintain that knowledge is not objective. At the same time they maintain that neither is knowledge subjective because knowledge is grounded in socially constituted relations, bounded by community. As Murphy (1988) says: "[A]narchy is not necessarily the outcome of postmodernism, because public discourse can culminate in the promulgation of social rules" (pp. 181-182). Thus like deconstr uctionists they deconstruct the objective/subjective polarity; but as affirmatives they maintain that not anything goes. QED: postmodernism without relativism.

The problem here lies in believing that majority opinion or community beliefs solves the problem of relativism, when in fact it does little more than raise the problem from an individual to group level. A case in point: Imagine people inside a house without windows listening to a slight pitter patter on the roof. After much discussion and factional power struggles, they all agree that it is raining outside. Then a person from outside their community, and literally from outside their house, walks into their house and asserts that it is sunny outside: "A bit windy," she says, "with acorns falling on the roof, but otherwise a glorious sunny day." Now, presumably there are real occurrences of "raining" and "not raining". Presumably in this case the people inside the house are simply mistaken in believing it is raining outside. Thus one can agree that the people inside the house have socially shared knowledge, and that that knowledge goes beyond mere subjectivity of each member. But to say that is not the same as to say that shared knowledge ipso-facto validates that knowledge. And the same holds true for ethical knowledge. A community can agree to discriminate against (or torture or slaughter) members from outside their community, but such agreements do not establish ethical validity.

Affirmatives might respond by saying that for a community to have valid ethical knowledge, not only must members within its community agree to it (thus protecting their own members from oppression), but similarly any time norms are applied to outside members, then those outside members must agree as well. Perhaps affirmatives would thereby establish the following principle: Membership in a democratic community is accorded to those who are affected by its norms, and, in addition, certain norms must protect minority from majority oppression. A move like this then begins to bound the ethical by establishing universal criteria, and by a conception of what constitutes oppression in a principled and privileged, if not objective, sense. But, in so doing, affirmatives begin to embrace a modern epistemology.

To retain the postmodern epistemology, a common response is to make a case based on literary analysis. Surely, it is said, a novel or play lends itself to multiple interpretations. King Lear, after all, cannot be reduced to a single meaning. Rather the play's rich and varied tapestry is precisely what allows person after person, generation after generation, to provide fresh and meaningful interpretations. Moreover, if one community says that a piece of fiction is good literature, and another community disagrees, is there not room for differing value judgments as well as differing interpretations? If so, then it is claimed that human life itself is rich and varied, like a text, more so, and thus "facts" and statements of "truth" need to give way to multiple interpretations and differing value judgments.

We appreciate the sensitivity that literary analysis can bring to the study of human nature. But life is not literature, and mischief occurs when postmodernists think it so. For instance, a deconstruction of physics might provide the "freedom" to generate and offer competing theories about how to understand gravity. But such a deconstruction does not and cannot negate the "facts" should we jump off a cliff, or the remarkable accuracy of even

Newtonian physics to tell us the speed at which we shall smash into the ground. Similarly, postmodern architecture can theorize that the "laws" of physics are a cultural or linguistic convention. But try saying that when building a house -- in any culture. "One [postmodern] architect is said to have 'built an officers' club, and the roof caved in during the dedication ceremonies.' In other cases postmodern designs are abandoned because 'they simply can't be built' (Seabrook 1991: 127, 129)" (Rosenau, 1992, p. 127).

Facts and truths do not stop with physics. Over the last decade, for instance, it has been increasingly clear that child sexual abuse actually happens far more often than previously thought (Bass & Davis, 1988; Masson, 1984). Many women are not just fantasizing what Freud called "seductions". But think about what is implied from a postmodern epistemology. It would be something like, "You as the woman have your interpretation, and that's important, and it's valid, and you should give voice to it, and become empowered through it." It would also follow, though, that the alleged perpetrator "has his own contrary interpretation, and that's as valid for him as the women's is for her". In response, we would think the woman might say "to heck with theory; the fact is that I was sexually abused, raped, and that my life is not like literature." This is not to discount the incredible complexity that arises in such remembrances, and that in some cases women may actually remember incorrectly, and unjustly accuse a perpetrator ("A Conversation," 1994; Tavris, 1993). But the claim is that either childhood sexual abuse such as penetration happened or did not, and that one can with validity universalize a judgment that such abuse is morally wrong. As Rosenau (1992) writes: "Modern time, space, and history can be dispensed within post-modern literature, and the results are entertaining. But this is not always the case in the social sciences" (p. 168).

We are suggesting, then, that social science research proceed without the baggage of postmodern theory. Granted, such constructs as truth, morality, logic, objectivity, generalizability, and rationality are hard ones to pin down philosophically; but, still, such constructs are allies, not enemies. And we would think such a bald statement should hardly need stating, except that the opposite so often gets said.

The Post-Postmodern Era -- or -- Modernity itself, Reinvigorated

Differences between people are important to understand, and such differences should often be respected and appreciated, sometimes even celebrated, as postmodernists highlight. But a theoretical orientation is needed that focuses more than on differences. After all, it would be impossible to understand an other if that other was not -- in important and meaningful ways -- like us. Imagine if we go to a "strange" people and see them routinely putting organic matter into their mouth and swallowing. We might assume that they, like us, need to eat to survive, and that we are watching people eat. We might be wrong, of course. It is possible, for example, that we are instead observing a religious rite that has little to do with eating, and that the food in this instance symbolizes something of religious significance. Here, of course, we would be assuming that these people believe in something along religious lines, and that they can and do use symbolic thought. We might be wrong, again. But if we are wrong about too many fundamental categories, we will have no basis by which to understand them in any meaningful way.

The reader might recall a poignant soliloquy in Shakespeare's Richard II, toward the last third of the play, when King Richard has been imprisoned. Richard reflects generally on the human condition, and thinks back on his earlier pompousness, and reconsiders his relation to the common person. A few lines:

> I live with bread like you, feel want, taste grief,
> Need friends. Subjected thus,
> How can you say to me I am a king? (III, i, 175-77)

Like others, Richard has similar biological needs (to eat), psychological states (feeling want and grief) and interpersonal goals (for friendship). Such similarities lead Richard to recognize disenfranchised people as similar to himself, opening the way for his understanding of otherness, and including others within his moral community. Indeed, for Shakespeare's plays -- or, for example, the Anancy stories from Jamaica and Africa -- to continue to profoundly affect audiences centuries later, and countries removed, speaks to the common ideas and problems that transcend culture and context.

Thus, in social-scientific research much can be gained if social scientists substantively embed within their research the study of differences and commonalities. This is not to say that postmodern theory compels a focus only on differences. But it does push and prod in that direction by virtue of its epistemic claims (e.g., against generalizability). On the other hand, while laboratory experiments -- based on modernity -- can offer important experimental controls, they often miss wide of the mark in offering meaningful data in the context of lived lives. And the psychological and anthropological literature is full of "modern" studies that run roughshod over non-Western perspectives, customs, and religions.

How then should such study proceed? -- in part, by reinvigorating modern research methods. For example, by all means we can draw not only on quantitative (and laboratory-based) analyses, but qualitative analyses. Ethnographies are important. Narratives have their place. Literature, too, for illustrative purposes. But in terms of its epistemic claims, and the types of research questions and issues that follow, we have been arguing that postmodernity offers up an unacceptable approach.

To illustrate this point further, consider Gilligan's (1982) line of research on gender and moral development, which some theorists have cast in postmodern lights. To develop her argument -- that women and girls are oriented toward an ethic of care, while men and boys are oriented toward an ethic of justice -- Gilligan provides qualitative excepts from two of her subjects: Amy and Jake. But we find her characterizations troubling. For example, is this Amy (care) or Jake (justice) speaking?

> WHAT DOES RESPONSIBILITY MEAN? It means pretty much thinking of others when I do something, and like if I want to throw a rock, not throwing it at a window, because I thought of the people who would have to pay for that window, not doing it just for yourself, because you have to live with other people and live with your community, and if you do something that hurts them all, a lot of people will end up suffering, and that is sort of the wrong thing to do. (p. 37)

In our reading, this person focuses on something like the following considerations: (a) not hurting others and preventing human suffering ("if you do something that hurts them all, a lot of people will end up suffering"), (b) interpersonal relationships ("thinking of others" and "you have to live with other people"), and (c) community ("and live with your community"). Based on Gilligan's own definitions, such considerations sound more like interpersonal caring than impersonal justice. Yet the example comes from not Amy, the female, but Jake, the male; and the example is supposed to support Gilligan's typology. In our view, it does not (cf. Kahn, 1992; Killen, 1996; Lourenco, 1990, 1991). Granted, one might say this is the very strength of presenting qualitative results; namely, they give the reader the opportunity to agree or disagree with the researcher's interpretation. That's true. That's good. And here we are in

agreement with Jessor, Colby, and Shweder (1996), and wish that journals would allow for the presentation of more qualitative results.

But here is our larger point. Where Gilligan provides qualitative data and we can check her interpretation, okay. But when she then draws inferences to her other participants -- without some form of external verification -- then there is no check. She says Jake represents her male respondents. How do we know? It is not sufficient to say "trust her". Granted, Gilligan tells a beautiful story. But, as we argued earlier, a story is not sufficient. Ironically, this is the critique many feminists, Gilligan included, have of Freud's case study of Dora. Freud tells a coherent and powerful story about Dora and her neurosis. But the charge is that it is just a story, Freud's story, full of biases and coverups and downright dishonesty. Freud aside, this is our point exactly: such problems can occur unchecked any time social-scientists give up on "modern" methods.

Thus, in this second section we sketch compelling examples of recent modern social-scientific research on culture and context. The research spans three content areas. The first concerns multicultural education, the second moral development in multicultural and cross-cultural contexts, and the third multicultural and cross-cultural views toward the natural environment. The point here is to show that modern research can take many different forms, cut across a diversity of content areas, employ a variety of research methods, and offer differing levels of analysis. Yet the research agendas are all strengthened by modern epistemological assumptions and methods.

Multicultural Education. Toward addressing the problems of multicultural education, Ogbu (e.g., 1977; 1990, 1992, 1993) distinguishes between voluntary (or immigrant) minorities from involuntary (or Castelike) minorities. Voluntary minorities have moved to a country more or less voluntarily, and tend to bring a sense of who they are from their homeland. In contrast, involuntary minorities are people who were originally brought into a country against their will, or colonized against their will. Thereafter, these minorities are often relegated to menial positions and denied true assimilation into the mainstream society.

Ogbu's research suggests that involuntary minorities experience more difficulties than voluntary minorities in school learning partly because of the relationship between their cultures and the mainstream culture. For example, voluntary minorities expect to have to cross over cultural boundaries to succeed, and compare their standard of success (however meager) to worse conditions in their home country. When voluntary minorities do succeed, they often remain visible members of their community, which show other community members that (a) with hard work success is possible, and (b) that one can retain one's cultural community affiliations and still be successful in the mainstream culture. In contrast, involuntary minorities, such as Black Americans, have no actual "back home" to compare their condition to, unless it is to an earlier time when Whites had enslaved them. Thus Black students often face a great deal of peer pressure not to be successful academically, for such an achievement would mean that one has become an "Uncle Tom" and joined the "enemy." Moreover, when individual Blacks do achieve success, they are perceived to have escaped their cultural community, and rarely reaffiliate with it. Thus Black youths face a powerful dilemma which they cannot easily resolve: either they must give up their cultural affiliation and succeed academically (and only possibly be assured success in the White culture), or retain their cultural affiliation and fail academically. All too often Black youths choose the latter, consciously or unconsciously.

While Ogbu's research has spanned several decades, and has a richness and depth that escapes easy summary, the point here is that Ogbu has investigated culture and context within

a theoretical framework that seeks substantively to understand differences and commonalities between peoples. In the United States, Blacks, Native Americans, early Mexican-Americans in the Southwest, and native Hawaiians (while different on important dimensions) all share a similar feature of being involuntary or castelike immigrants. In turn, Chinese, Koreans, Japanese, and Punjabi Indians, among other peoples (while also different on important dimensions) share the similar feature of being voluntary immigrants. Such common ground between some peoples, and differences between others, help us understand the differential success in learning between various cultural constituencies in the United States. Moreover, immigrant standing is not fixed or static, but can change over time as cultures change, or even change for a people across context. For example, while Koreans are a voluntary minority in the United States, they are an involuntary minority in Japan. Thus a focus on differences and commonalities allows Ogbu the room he needs to develop a dynamic theory of multicultural education. It is important to notice that from a postmodern perspective presumably such research would be shunned for attempting to formulate powerful generalizations that cut across culture and context.

Moral Development in Multicultural and Cross-cultural Contexts. The question of whether moral development is similar or different across cultures poses consistently thorny problems in the literature. In particular, it is a question that often gets addressed in the context of moral relativism, of whether people of one culture can legitimately judge the practices of another culture. Advocates of relativism (including postmodernists) often point to seemingly incommensurable practices of other cultures -- infanticide, cannibalism, suttee, slavery -- to support their claim for moral diversity, and the inability ever to find a single moral frame of reference by which to judge moral practices. However, as has been argued elsewhere (Kahn 1991), such a claim embodies a confound in that it seeks to establish an epistemic moral claim of what ought to be based only on empirical data. But the confound aside, is it true that the moral life is so different between peoples? Any answer hinges on accurate and meaningful assessments.

A case in point. Shweder, Mahapatra, and Miller (1987) report on findings from their research in India that show that devout Hindus believe it is immoral for a widow to eat fish. At first glance, such a moral belief seems highly discrepant with moral beliefs in Western societies. However, the data were further examined by Turiel and his colleagues (Turiel, Killen, and Helwig, 1987), and they show that the traditional Hindus believe that if a widow eats fish she will harm her husband's spirit. In comparison to most Westerners, such Hindus differ in their assumption that spirits exist and that spirits can be hurt by earthly activity. But what is similar is that traditional Hindu women, like most women in Western countries, care about the welfare of their husbands, and act accordingly.

This role of underlying assumptions in moral reasoning has begun to receive systematic attention. For example, in one study Wainryb (1991) presented individuals (in 6th grade, tenth grade, and college) with hypothetical situations where an actor engages in a prototypical moral violation (e.g., a father, out of frustration, spanks his son who has done nothing wrong). Then that violation was coupled with a potentially valid reason (e.g., a father spanked his son for repeatedly misbehaving). In the interview, subjects were asked to evaluate not only the act, but the informational assumption of the actor (e.g., that spanking is an efficient way to teach young children a lesson). Then the informational assumption that the subject believed to be true was changed to its opposite, and then the subjects were asked to reevaluate the act (e.g., "suppose that experts who know a lot about the ways children learn could prove that spanking does not teach children anything, would it be alright or not alright then for the father to spank his son for misbehaving?"). Results showed a significant change in subjects' act evaluations based on the manipulation of informational assumptions. Thus it

appears that what individuals believe to be true, and what they hold as different criteria for what constitutes proof of truth, has a significant bearing on how they evaluate the moral legitimacy of an act (see also Friedman, in press; Laupa, 1991; Madden, 1992; Turiel, Hildebrandt, & Wainryb, 1991; Wainryb, 1993).

In assessing the moral life, it is also important to be sensitive to the ways in which different moral practices can be structured by similar moral concerns for others' welfare and justice. In describing the Bushman of the Kalahari desert, for example, van der Post (1958/1986) says that the Bushman leave their elderly to die alone in the desert. That practice may sound rather cruel to a Western sensibility. But when van der Post fills out the account of the Bushman's reasons, the practice seems far from strange. The Bushman are a nomadic people that depend on physical movement for their survival. The elderly are only left behind when they are no longer able to keep stride with the nomadic pace. When forced to leave a member behind, the tribe conducts ritual dances and ceremonies, and builds the person a token hut, and leaves a token amount of food: all apparently to convey honor and respect, and felt loss at their impending death -- an unavoidable death should the tribe as a whole be able to survive. When understood in this context, the Bushman practice becomes understandable. Indeed, some may find it more humane and compassionate than the way the elderly are sometimes treated in the United States: shunted off to nursing homes, isolated, and largely ignored.

When important moral differences do occur between peoples, it is not necessarily the case that the practices are believed legitimate by the victims. For example, Hatch reports that women in the Yanomamo tribe in Brazil were "occasionally beaten [by men], shot with barbed arrows, chopped with machetes or axes, and burned with firebrands" (p. 91). Hatch also reports that the Yanomamo women did not appear to enjoy such physically abusive treatment, and were seen running in apparent fear from such assaults. Psychological data of a similar effect can be found in a recent study by Turiel and Wainryb (in press) on the Druze population in Israel. The Druze largely live in segregated villages, are of Islamic religious orientation, and organized socially around patriarchal relationships. The father, as well as brothers, uncles, and other male relatives -- and eventually a woman's husband -- exercise considerable authority over women and girls in the family, and restrict their activities to a large degree. For example, women are not allowed to attend any place where there is mixed company, such as restaurants, cinemas, or the beach. They need permission from their father or husband to work, and usually turn over their salaries to their father or husband. However, when these women were interviewed, "a majority of them (78%) unequivocally stated that the husband's or father's demands and restrictions were unfair" (p. 44). Thus Yanomamo and Druz women -- like many women in Western societies -- are often unwilling victims within what they themselves perceive to be an uncaring or unjust society. In such situations, it is less the case that societies differ morally, and more that some societies (ours included) are involved explicitly in immoral practices.

This is not to say that meaningful and legitimate moral differences in the moral life between cultures do not exist. It is to say that assessing such differences is not straightforward; and we have suggested that accurate and meaningful assessments need to be sensitive as much to commonality as to difference.

Multicultural and Cross-Cultural Views Toward the Natural Environment. Recent work by Kahn and Friedman on black children's and parents views and values of nature provide yet another way to pursue a research program committed to understanding differences and commonalities. It is sometimes said in the popular press, and indeed from some black educators, that the black community in the inner cities is not interested in

environmental issues. Rather, it is said, other issues are more immediate and important to the black community, like dealing with violence in the schools, broken homes, drugs, and hopefully, on a positive note, education. Kahn and Friedman (1995) began to investigate this issue by interviewing 72 black children, 24 children in each of three grade levels: 1st, 3rd, and 5th. In this school, 60% of the children were considered "low-performing": two or more grade levels behind. Ninety-one percent of the children's families qualified for State's free-lunch program.

One overriding finding was that the perception of inner-city black children as being unaware of and uninterested in nature and environmental issues is too simplistic, and overlooks the rich and diverse ways these children have environmental knowledge, concerns, and values. For example, of the children interviewed, the majority (84%) said that animals played an important part in their lives, as did plants (87%) and parks/open spaces (70%). The majority of children (72%) talked about environmental issues (such as pollution) with their family, and did things to help the environment, such as recycling (74%) or picking up garbage (25%). Children judged that polluting a bayou would have harmful effects on birds (94%), water (91%), insects (77%), and the view (93%). Moreover, children said that it would matter to them if such harm occurred to birds (89%), water (91%), insects (77%), and the view (93%).

Friedman and Kahn also analyzed whether children judged the act of throwing garbage in their local bayou as a violation of a moral obligation. They drew here on the domain literature of Turiel (1983, in press), Nucci (1981, 1996), Smetana (1983, 1989), and others where a moral obligation is assessed, in part, based on the criterion judgments of prescriptivity (e.g., throwing garbage in a bayou is not all right to do), rule contingency, (the act is not all right to do even if the law says it is all right to do), and generalizability (the act is not all right for people in another country to do, even if people in that country do the act). Based on these and three other criterion judgments, and in consort with children's moral justifications, results showed that the majority of the children believed it was morally obligatory not to throw garbage in a bayou. Developmentally, fewer children in grade 1 (68%) compared to grades 3 (91%) and 5 (100%) provided such morally obligatory judgments.

In this study, Friedman and Kahn also began to characterize children' environmental moral reasoning. In the broadest perspective, two main forms of environmental reasoning emerged from the data: anthropocentric and biocentric. Anthropocentric reasoning appeals to how effects to the environment affect human beings. Justification categories included appeals to (a) personal interests (e.g., "animals matter to me a little bit because we need more pets and different animals to play with"); (b) aesthetics (e.g., "because I'd get to see all the colors of the plants and the beauty of the whole -- of the whole natural plants"); and (c) the physical, material, and psychological welfare of self and others (e.g., "air pollution goes by and people get sick, it really bothers me because that could be another person's life").

In addition to anthropocentric forms of reasoning, different forms of biocentric environmental reasoning emerged from the data. Biocentric reasoning appeals to a larger ecological community of which humans may be a part. Biocentric justification categories included appeals to the intrinsic value of nature ("if nature made birds, nature does not want to see birds die") and to the rights of nature. In particular, two ways emerged from the data for how children established biocentric rights reasoning. In one way, natural entities (usually animals) were compared directly with humans. For example, one child said: "Fishes, they want to live freely, just like we live freely...They have to live in freedom, because they don't like living in an environment were there is much pollution that they die every day." Thus an animal's desire ("to live freely") is viewed to be equivalent to that of a human's desire, and because of this direct equivalency children reasoned that animals merit the same moral

consideration as do humans.

A second way occurred through establishing indirect compensatory relationships. Here is an example of a 5th grade boy, Arnold:

> Fish need the same respect as we need....Fishes don't have the same things we have. But they do the same things. They don't have noses, but they have scales to breathe, and they have mouths like we have mouths. And they have eyes like we have eyes. And they have the same co-ordinates we have....A co-ordinate is something like, if you have something different, then I'm going to have something, but it's going to be the same. Just going to be different.

This is a marvelous passage, as one can feel the constructivist process at work within Arnold. He chooses a word -- coordinate -- which is at once incongruous and precise. It is incongruous because people do not usually use this word in this way. But it is precise because a coordinate can refer to two intersecting index terms which, taken together, refer to a single point. Similarly, Arnold seeks to coordinate two disparate ideas into a unitary position. That is, Arnold appears to draw on a word he encountered in some other context to help him explain that while fish are in some respects not the same as people (they don't have noses like people do) that in important functions (such as breathing and seeing) they are the same. Thus, Arnold moves beyond a reciprocity based on directly perceivable and salient characteristics to be able to establish moral equivalences based on functional properties.

Now, how many children like Arnold did we interview? In other words, to what extent did biocentric reasoning emerge as a form of children's environmental moral reasoning? The answer is not many. Biocentric reasons accounted for no more than 7% of children's justifications, usually much less, depending on the question. Still, it is worth calling attention to biocentric forms of reasoning. For one thing, some readers may be surprised that any biocentric reasoning emerged in this population of inner city children. For another thing, biocentric reasoning may reflect the leading edge of the developmental progression from fifth grade onward (cf. Beringer, 1992; Kahn, 1996, in press; Nevers, Billmann-Mahecha, & Gebhard, 1996).

Two explanations are typically provided to support the belief that black Americans have little interest in environmental issues (see Mohai, 1990, and Taylor, 1989 for an overview). One explanation, based on Maslow's theory, has been referred to as the "hierarchy of needs" explanation: that people will not have concern about higher-level environmental concerns if their basic needs for food, shelter, and physical security are barely met. A second explanation has been referred to as the "subculture" explanation: that distinct qualities of the black experience -- such as a history of slavery -- have led blacks to ignore if not oppose nature. In the words of the political activist Eldredge Cleaver (1969): "black people learned to hate the land...[and] have come to measure their own value according to the number of degrees they are away from the soil" (pp. 57-58). However, the results from the Houston developmental study point in a different direction: that the serious constraints of living in an inner-city community cannot easily squelch black children's diverse and rich appreciation for nature, and moral responsiveness to its preservation (cf. Bryant & Mohai, 1992; Bullard, 1990).

Similar results emerged from the Houston parent study. Given space limitations, we will but highlight two findings. First, the majority (88%) of the parents said that they had conversations with their children about environmental issues, such as water pollution, garbage, harm to plants, air pollution, harm to animals, recycling, and chemicals in food. These family conversations were started in a variety of ways, based, for example, on observing

and interacting with nature directly (47%), TV and movies (47%), school discussions (27%), and newspapers or other media (7%). These conversations were often poignant:

> Yesterday, as my son and I were walking to the store and we were walking down Alabama [street] and for some reason, I think they're getting ready to widen the street. And it's a section of Alabama that I thought was so beautiful because of the trees and they've cut down all the trees. And you know it hurts me every time I walk that way and I hadn't realized that my son had paid attention to it, too. So, he asked me, he said, "Mama, why are these, why have they cut down all the trees?" And then he asked me, "Well, if they cut down all the trees everywhere, would that have an affect on how we breathe?"

> The water we drink just comes out of the faucet and sometimes he'll say something like "this water doesn't look right." You know, it could have something in it that could be detrimental to us. [My son asks] "could it hurt me? How do we know what's in this water?" And to some of his questions I have no answer because I mean, I cannot tell him what's in the water 'cause I don't know. I wonder some things myself.

Such conversations point to an appreciation for nature (of trees), environmental concerns which arise through direct experience of environmental degradation (the cutting of trees and water pollution), and perhaps some sense of powerlessness in not being able to preserve what exists of their community's natural beauty and in not knowing about their environment's safety.

Second, on a scale of 1-10 (with 1 the least important and 10 the most important), we asked parents to rank the importance of drug education for their children. Results showed a mean rank of 8.5 (SD 3.3). On the same scale, parents ranked the importance of environmental science education for their children. Results showed a mean rank of 8.7 (SD 2.4). Matched-pair t-tests showed no statistical difference between parents' rankings for the importance of drug education versus environmental education. In comparison to environmental education, 57% of the parents ranked drug education as equally important, 29% as more important, and 14% as less important. Of parents who equated the importance of drug and environmental education, their reasoning often focused on the physical ramifications of both problems:

> With the drugs, we're nothing. Without the environment, we're nothing. And drugs is something I see every day. There are dealers across the street from me. So, I see this every day and it's just killing us. I mean, it really is killing us and with the drugs, we're not going to have any youth...With the drugs, you're not going to have a future and without any environment we're not going to have a future.

> Well let's put it like this here. If you don't take care of one [drugs], it's going to kill you. If you don't take care of the other [the environment] it's going to kill you.

Gates and West (1996) recently wrote: "We [the black communities] need something we don't yet have: a way of speaking about black poverty that doesn't falsify the reality of black advancement; a way of speaking about black advancement that doesn't distort the enduring realities of black poverty" (p. B7). Indeed, through our interviews, black children and parents gave voice to both realities. They described the harsh living of urban poverty while articulating, sometimes eloquently, their environmental awareness, values, and sensibilities, and guarded hopefulness for their future.

While not losing sight of particularistic effects, an important question remains unanswered. Namely, might important aspects of the results from the Houston developmental study reflect universal features of children's development? Howe, Friedman, and Kahn (1996) began to address this question in a study conducted in Brazil, choosing two locations of particular interest. One location was Manaus, the largest Brazilian city within the vast Amazon rain forest. This city, with nearly one million inhabitants, is located thirteen miles above the junction of the Rio Negro and the Amazon River, and it is at this junction that the Amazon River is said to begin. Manaus services a growing eco-tourist trade from North America and Europe. The city is also considered the center of the region's electronics industry, and it enjoys tax-free imports due to the government's efforts to spur international development in the region. Yet, even given this economic development, a great deal of poverty exists within Manaus, as do poor educational opportunities, jobs, and medical care. In some sections of the city, refuse and litter are readily apparent, and sickness manifests (e.g., cholera, malaria, and yellow fever). In contrast, Novo Ayrao is a small village with approximately 4000 inhabitants. The village could only be reached by means of an eight hour boat ride up the Rio Negro from Manaus. The villagers' primary economic activities include fishing and the extraction of forest products, most notably lumber. The landscape is largely pristine with only small areas cleared for housing, commerce, and dirt roads. There is little visible litter or garbage; and according to some inhabitants neither crime nor drugs are present in the community. The children who were interviewed attended one of the village's two schools.

The results were surprising in several ways. First, it was expected that since Brazilian children, particularly in Novo Ayrao, lived closer to nature than their Houston cohorts, that more biocentric reasoning -- which embeds humans in a larger ecological moral community -- would emerge. This hypothesis was not supported. Three explanations are possible. One explanation, recently offered informally by Roger Hart at the Graduate School of the City University of New York, is that while the village was accessible only by boat, it was still heavily influenced by the missionary culture. Indeed, by interviewing the children in Portuguese (instead of an indigenous language), it could be said that the interview was weighted toward eliciting responses imbued with the missionary culture. Hart contends that had an indigenous population of Amazonian children been interviewed that biocentrism would have been present. A second explanation is that biocentric reasoning may have a cultural basis, and does not emerge in every culture that lives close to the land. Diamond (1993), for example, provides anecdotal evidence that indigenous populations in New Guinea, while extremely knowledgeable about nature, demonstrate virtually no biocentric considerations. Third, based on a recent study (Kahn, in press a), it is possible that biocentric reasoning emerges more fully in older adolescents and adults, and that such reasoning might have been found with an older population in the village where we had conducted our research.

Part of what is at stake in the above developmental analysis is one's very conception of young children's relationship with nature. Often two competing conceptions are offered. One suggests -- in almost the tradition of Rousseau -- that young children have a deep connection to the natural world which then, in time, becomes largely severed by modern society. A second conception suggests that people only develop a deep connection to the natural world, if at all, in adolescence or later.

Indeed, both conceptions may be right. As the above results suggest, young children do not appear to demonstrate biocentric concepts, particularly those which draw on rights, reciprocity, compensatory relationships, and a moral teleos. On this point, the above results are in agreement with Kellert (1996) who found that adolescents witness a sharp increase in

abstract and conceptual reasoning about the natural world. But Kellert also says that only by adolescence does ethical reasoning about nature emerge, and that it "seems pointless to focus on teaching very young children ecology and ethical responsibilities for conserving nature at a time when they are incapable of internalizing this type of abstract and compassionate thinking" (p. 49). On the contrary, our results show that young children (at least by the ages of six to eight years of age) have moral commitments to nature, albeit often framed in anthropocentric terms. Moreover, young children (though less often than for older children) view harm to nature as a violation of a moral obligation, based, as defined earlier, on the criteria of prescriptivity, rule contingency, and generalizability.

Yet it is a difficult issue, to be sure. Young children as "deep ecologists"? Maybe yes, maybe no. Part of what makes for such ambivalence is that the problem cuts across two major areas of development: reasoning and values, or more broadly, cognition and affect. Often the structural-developmental project is framed in terms of cognition. Yet, even for Piaget, affect was never divorced from structure. That means more than that emotions can stimulate or retard the development of intellectual operations, though they can. In addition, children reflect on emotions, and through such reflections, emotions provide the "raw material" for the construction of knowledge and principled reasoning (Arsenio & Lover, 1995; cf. Lourenco & Machado, 1996). As DeVries and Kohlberg (1987) write: "For Piaget, objects are simultaneously cognitive and affective. An object disappearing behind a screen is at the same time an object of knowledge and a source of interest, amusement, satisfaction, or disappointment" (p. 33). If this is true for physical objects, like a ball, how much more so for the animate world. For a child, a dog can be a source of knowledge (both the dog and the child need to eat to live), and a source of pleasure, comfort, security, playfulness, and companionship.

The lack of biocentric reasoning in the Brazilian data was not the only surprising finding. Contrary to our expectations, across 26 questions (which formed a large body of both studies), there were only two statistical differences between the 5th grade black children in the inner city of the United States and Brazilian children in urban and rural parts of the Amazon. Moreover, in an comparative analysis of the data from both studies, there was no statistical difference across cultures in children's environmental orientation, as measured by a composite score. In addition, the coding system that was used to code the Brazilian children's environmental moral reasoning virtually replicated the system developed in the Houston developmental study, and this system proved robust enough for the task. Indeed, the structure of children's reasoning sometimes almost echoed one another. For illustrative purposes, consider but the following four pair of matched examples:

1A. [It is not all right to throw garbage in the river] because it causes pollution that is dangerous for us. Because now we have cholera, a very dangerous disease and there are others attacking us like the malaria. (Brazilian child)

1B. Because some people that don't have homes, they go and drink out of the rivers and stuff and they could die because they get all of that dirt and stuff inside of their bodies. (Houston child)

Both of the above children reason that is wrong to throw garbage in the local waterway because people might drink from polluted water, and get sick ("now we have cholera, a very dangerous disease"; "they could die").

2A. Because the river was not made to have trash thrown in it, because the river belongs to nature. (Brazilian child)

2B. Because water is what nature made; nature didn't make water to be purple and stuff like that, just one color. When you're dealing with what nature made, you need not destroy it. (Houston child)

Both of the above children base their environmental judgments on the view that nature has its own purposes ("the river was not made to have trash thrown in it"; "nature didn't make water to be purple and stuff").

3A. Because animals have to have their chance. They also must have to live. We should not mistreat them, because if it happens to us, we don't like it. (Brazilian child)

3B. Some people don't like to be dirty. And when they throw trash on the animals, they probably don't like it. So why should the water be dirty and they don't want to be dirty. (Houston child)

Both of the above children judge as wrong the mistreatment of animals based on considering whether humans would similarly like to be treated in that way ("because if it happens to us, we don't like it"; "some people don't like to be dirty...[so the animals] probably don't like it").

4A. Even if the animals are not human beings, for them they are the same as we are, they think like we do. (Brazilian child)

4B. Fish don't have the same things we have. But they do the same things. They don't have noses, but they have scales to breathe, and they have mouths like we have mouths. And they have eyes like we have eyes. (Houston child -- from Arnold quoted earlier)

Both of the above children recognize that while animals are not identical to human beings ("animals are not human beings"; fish don't have the same things we have") that both animals and people have significant functional equivalences (animals "think like we do"; fish "don't have noses, but they have scales to breath").

Taken together, the above studies support the line of reasoning developed earlier: that in important ways individuals' moral reasoning across cultures is similarly structured by concerns for human welfare, fairness, and rights. To convey this idea better, and its relation to environmental reasoning, consider Huebner and Garrod's (1991) claim that Tibetan Buddhism "presents profound challenges to those who argue for general applicability of moral reasoning theories originating in Western culture" (p. 341). They illustrate their point by providing a passage from one of their interviews with a Tibetan monk, which we quote in its entirety:

> He [the bug] went under my feet, but he did not die. Now he was suffering, wasn't he? Suffering. I figured that if I left him like that, he would suffer forever, because there was no medicine for him as there is for a human being. So I prayed ... And then I killed him with my hand, the suffering one. Why did I kill him? He was suffering. If I left him, he would suffer. So it was better for him not to suffer any longer. That's why I killed him. And I prayed ... that one day in the next life, he would become a man like me, who can understand Buddhism and who will be a great philosopher in Tibet. (p. 345)

Huebner and Garrod say that "such sensitivity to the nonhuman world leads to moral dilemmas not likely considered in Western culture" (p. 345). But surely they are mistaken. Have not many of us experienced moral qualms very similar to this Buddhist monk -- stepping by mistake on ants or caterpillars, or perhaps accidentally driving over a dog or cat and killing it, and feeling remorse? More formally, Western rights-based environmental philosophers routinely trouble over the moral status of animals (Spiegel, 1988; Stone, 1986;). Consider, for example, a short passage from but one analytic rights-based philosopher, Tom Regan (1986):

> There are times, and these are not infrequent, when tears come to my eyes when I see, or read, or hear of the wretched plight of animals in the hands of humans. Their pain, their suffering, their loneliness, their innocence, their death. Anger. Rage. Pity. Sorrow. Disgust...It is our heart, not just our head, that calls for an end, that demands of us that we overcome, for them, the habits and forces behind their systematic oppression. (p. 39)

Regan's sensitivity to the nonhuman world leads him and many other Westerners to difficult moral dilemmas. If one accepts, for example, that animals feel pain and thereby have moral standing, if not rights, are people never justified in causing animals harm? How about to advance medical knowledge? Cannot indigenous people justifiably hunt to eat? Cannot we justifiably eat meat?

Such thorny questions we submit are considered not just by eminent Western philosophers and not just by most adults, but by children, too. Recall Kohlberg's (1971) amusing anecdotal evidence from his young son who became a vegetarian because he believed that it was wrong to kill animals. Kohlberg then read his son a book about Eskimo life which involved a seal-killing expedition. "He [the son] got angry during the story and said, 'you know, there is one kind of meat I would eat, Eskimo meat. It's bad to kill animals, so it's all right to eat them" (p. 192).

Or consider a further dialogue from the interview with Arnold (a 5th grade child from the Houston developmental study, quoted earlier). Arnold says that "we really never should kill animals." The interviewer then asks whether Arnold eats meat, and Arnold says "not that much" and "only when there's rough times and we really need it." Thus, there is a bit of a tension in Arnold's reasoning: he first categorically objects to killing animals, but then allows for exceptions. Later in the interview, Arnold says:

> I love animals...Animals are important to me because I don't like seeing animals being mistreated because every animal needs respect...No matter what life form they're from, no matter how shaped or sized they are.

The interviewer then pushes with another potential dilemma:

> DO YOU HAVE THE SAME FEELING ABOUT MOSQUITOES? Well, not really. [Laughter.] TELL ME HOW THAT'S DIFFERENT? Because mosquitoes they begin to get on your nerves a little bit. And they make little bumps on you. I don't really like mosquitoes. But it's still wrong to kill 'em though. Because they really need to live freely too, just like every insect, every bear, any kind of, type of human.

Thus Arnold faces a dilemma like that faced by the Buddhist monk, quoted earlier: both have sensitivity to the suffering of animals; and both need to find their way in a world where animals, like humans, will sometimes suffer tremendously.

In summary, in this section we have drawn on structural-developmental theory to convey the particular, textured voices of individuals as they reason, often morally, about the environment and environmental degradation. We have also sought to highlight that which may be universal. Both go hand in hand, the particular and the universal; and in our view both are well served by modernity.

Conclusion

With the increasing focus on issues pertaining, for example, to race, class, and gender, studies have increasingly relied on postmodern theory. Perhaps this is because postmodernism highlights differences, and thus can give a voice to the disenfranchised. But postmodernism also assumes that fundamentally there is little of importance that people share psychologically, and that epistemologically there is little that transcends culture and context by which we can judge the intellectual or moral merits of such difference. This view seems to us not only empirically wrong and philosophically inadequate, but politically unworthy in that it increasingly fragments people from one another, and promotes a view that power itself is the only legitimate regulator. Thus, we have suggested that more can be gained by theory that in some way or another substantively embeds both the study of difference and commonality. To illustrate what is possible, we sketched a range of research on such diverse topics as multicultural education, moral development across culture and context, and -- more extensively -- multicultural and cross-cultural views toward the natural environment. It is hoped that the ideas presented here can heighten the commitment to discovering and building upon the common ground between people, as much as recognizing and appreciating differences. So many splintered factions exist, fighting one another -- on the international scene, if not also within our respective academic disciplines -- that we can ask of ourselves no less.

Footnotes

(1) For a detailed account of this episode, see in The New York Review of Books Sheenan's (1993a) article, Derrida's (1993) response, and Sheenan's (1993b) compelling rebuttal.

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